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25 March 1946

MEMORANDUM:

SUBJECT: Priority Intelligence Targets

TO : Chief, SI

1. An estimate of the prevailing world situation leads inevitably to the conclusion that the primary object of national concern in the foreign sphere arises today and in the foreseeable future from the activities of the Soviet Union, and of other governments and political organizations which tend to assist in the fulfillment of its purposes. No other threat to our national security and interests, or to the international legal order which we are committed to uphold, approaches in dimension or in imminence that which is latent in the policies and actions of the USSR and its assorted allies. The obvious corollary is that the intelligence-procurement resources of this agency should be directed with unequivocal emphasis towards uncovering the intentions proclivities, capabilities and activities of (a) the Soviet government, and (b) of all other governments and organizations whose actions would have strategic importance either in support of, or in opposition to, Soviet policies and Soviet foreign adventures.

2. The large design of Soviet policies would be illuminated if we could fix with certainty the basic motivations of the creators. For want of clinching evidence, speculation in regard to motivation has ranged from that of Marxist-Leninist ideology, to the inner compulsions of dictatorship, to a Russian-national fear- or power-complex. No one of these elements should be excluded from a realistic appraisal of the dynamics of Soviet policy.

(a) The sense of a need, derived from Marx, to carry out the course of historic evolutionary destiny, coupled with the fanatical revolutionary and crusading zeal of Lenin, continues to animate the high prophets and possibly the rulers of the Soviets. The goal is the establishment of the supremacy of Communist dictatorships and the elimination of the power of bourgeois capitalist democracies, with the ultimate professed intention of preparing the way for the emergence of a world-wide classless communist society. The followers of this faith and mission look upon Soviet Russia as the spearhead of revolution and social progress, and regard the Soviet Union as the "Model League of Communist Nations", into which other Communist-governed states may be admitted progressively, until the entire world is ripe for "the state to wither away" before the evolution of cooperative society. In so far as this view or faith prevails, several consequences highly significant for the American national interest (and an American Intelligence Service) follow:

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- (1) all states and societies (including the United States) which are not communist-governed must be considered by the Soviet Union as enemies, with whom peaceful relations are only a temporary expedient;
- (2) the torch-bearers of communism in every country of the world must hold a loyalty to the Soviet Union above that of any national patriotism; and
- (3) since, in the communist view the supreme goal justifies any means, every form of open and concealed warfare, trickery, deception and propaganda may be expected from Communist-controlled governments and organizations.

(b) The present rulers of the USSR are a small, more-or-less tightly-knit band of politicians and soldiers whose motivation to remain in office consists of - depending upon the point of view - the compulsions of their historic mission, the ever-present fear of being "purged", or an intoxicating sense of power and the glory of privileged position. Given either interpretation, they can continue to control a mass of people within a regime devoted to a fifteen-year program of strengthening the industrial sinews of military power, only by (1) providing satisfactory evidence that this concentration on production rather than consumers' goods is absolutely essential; or (2) by devising "circuses", or, perhaps, "crusades", to distract attention from personal wants. The "evidence" consists of "capitalist war-mongers", bent on the destruction of the Soviet Union, who may conveniently be goaded into vociferous outbursts by some militant act or utterance which the Soviet rulers can readily provide. The "crusades" or "circuses" can be engineered anywhere from the Adriatic to the Pacific. (3) Despite ideologies, the Russians remain Russian, and as such, reflect the social inheritance of the people and the political inheritance of former rulers. To some extent, therefore, the pattern of Soviet policies must be viewed within the framework of Russia's strategic position, of the historic Russian outlook upon the outside world, and of the traditions of Russian expansionist dreams. The great territorial mass of Russia is fringed, for the most part, with small, weak and industrially-unadvanced communities. Whether from a fear of the occupation of these areas by a hostile foreign power, or from the desire for aggrandizement, the Russian propulsion eastward, southward and westward was well marked long before the Soviets came to power, and has not shown any signs of diminishing momentum since.

(c) "Security" and "expansionist" motives may very readily be cut from the same cloth, or, at least, may depend upon which side of the cloth you are looking at. In a very real sense, security-demands resulting from deeply-rooted fear might only be satisfied with the establishment of world dominion - of course, by one's own state. The Russian who has lived for centuries under some form of despotism, and frequently of foreign invaders, has never known freedom from fear. Suspicion of the foreigner (unless a Communist), so assiduously stimulated by Communist propagandists, blends easily with fear of tyrants and invaders, and with a native provincialism of the masses which the Soviet rulers have not wished to disturb. Security and expansionist motives have intermingled in the traditional drive of Russia to obtain control of outlets to the sea - the Pacific, the Yellow Sea, the Baltic, the Black Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean.

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3. All of the above motivations may be detected in the form and substance of Soviet action. It matters little in what proportion the ingredients are compounded, for a curious logic of events has decreed their blending into a perfect working harmony. Assuming for the argument that Soviet rulers are no longer Communists, it is nevertheless necessary for them to adopt the pretension in order to avail themselves of an indispensable ally in the form of hundreds of thousands of the "faithful" the world over - ~~the~~ far more numerous, better disciplined, and hence more powerful than any Nazi Fifth Column. In addition, the moral appeal of communism aids in the retention of public support, and the crusading purpose assists in the furtherance of national expansionist policies abroad, especially where down-trodden peoples must be "rescued" from capitalist tyrants. Or, on the other hand, if the Soviet governing clique still fervently believes in the Communist mission, they have fertile national soil at home in which to sow the seeds of ineluctable hostility to, and by, capitalist-bourgeois states, and thereupon may reap a harvest of support for any action designed to strengthen the security of Russia by rearmament, by "strategic" annexations, or by promoting friendly revolutions in neighboring states.

4. The above considerations have been presented in order to delineate briefly the complex character of the phenomena which American Secret Intelligence must seek to understand in all its ramifications. The broad sweep of essential intelligence targets has been adumbrated, and may now be indicated more precisely under the categories below. It is to be borne firmly in mind that the province of SI is that portion of intelligence on the subjects below which can only be obtained by clandestine means.

- (a) First and foremost, the Soviet Union: its intentions, capabilities and activities in their bearing on its external relations;
- (b) Communist-controlled, or Soviet-oriented, governments: their intentions, capabilities and activities;
- (c) Communist political parties and Communist-influenced organizations abroad;
- (d) Other foreign countries and governments whose dispositions pro or con would have an important bearing on Soviet decisions and actions in the foreign field, or which are territorially adjacent to the Soviet Union, or its satellites, or which are possible objects of Soviet designs.

5. The Soviet Union

- (a) Soviet intentions in foreign relations and military policy.

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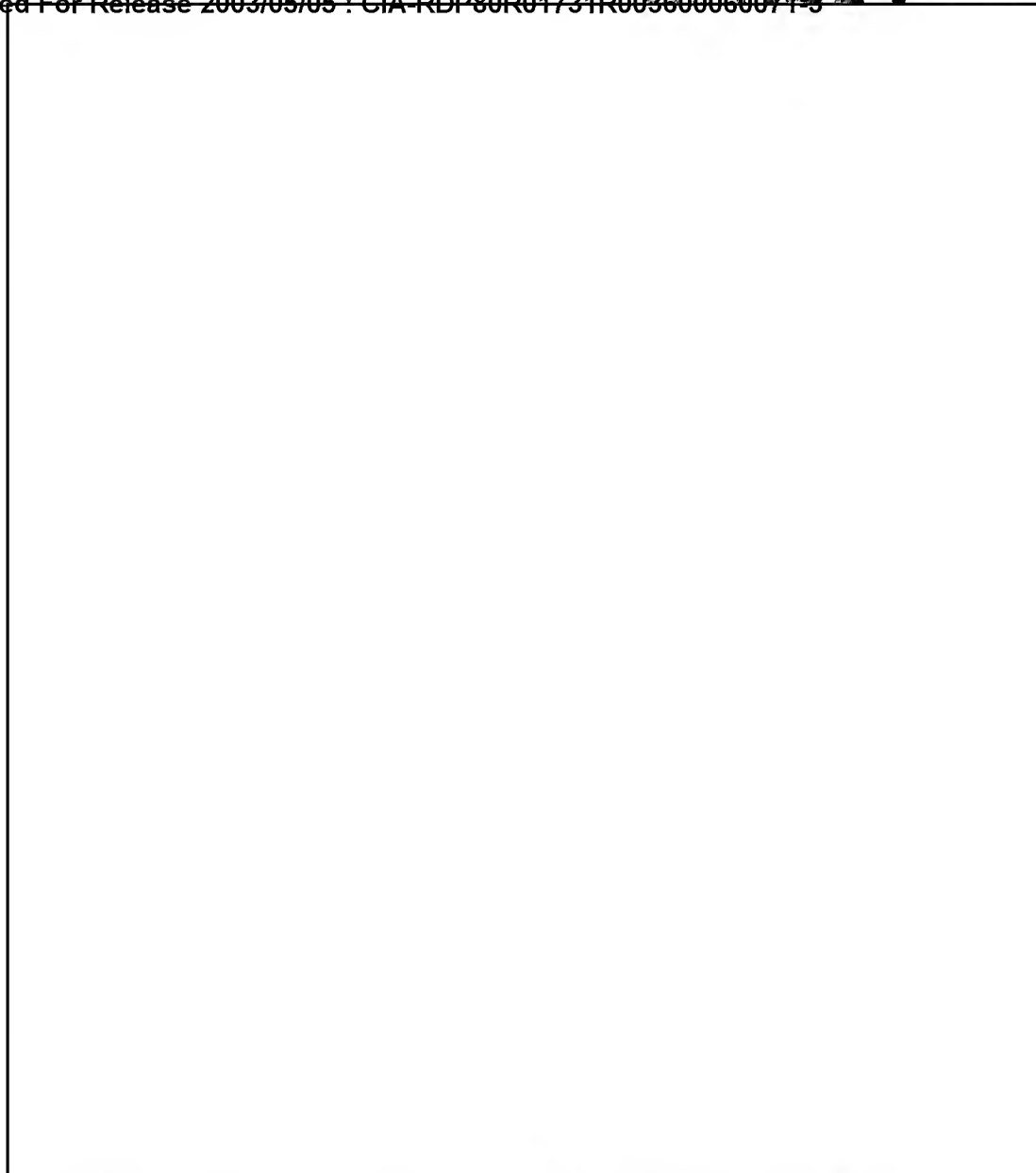
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10. This appraisal of priority intelligence targets has been developed within the [ ] office without consultation with the major customer and action agencies of the government which SSU is bound to serve. It is impracticable at the present time to obtain the benefit of a considered statement of their intelligence requirements, or their estimate of the relative strategic importance of various countries and areas. Obviously, such advice is not only highly desirable, but is a condition of an effectively-functioning SSU. It is moreover necessary that the specific secret intelligence targets within a given area be formulated in the light of knowledge of the total intelligence-procurement potentialities of other agencies of government abroad. Otherwise, duplication and wasted effort is inevitable. It is impossible to lay down a hard and fast delineation (applicable to all countries) of the field of clandestine intelligence, in view of the widely-varying conditions under which orthodox information agencies must operate.

It need hardly be added that this paper has been developed on the plane of the ideal objectives, without reference to the degree of

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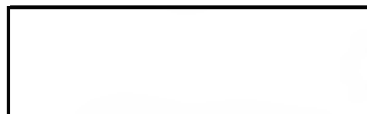
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operational difficulties which might be involved in the fulfillment of any of its parts.

11. It should also be clear from the context that no effort was made to develop a hard-and-fast sequence of priorities, or to define precisely the primary intelligence targets in any given area. The purpose was rather to lay out a systematic pattern of subjects, intelligence about which is essential to the national interest, and to indicate the countries wherein the pattern prominently manifests itself. More specific intelligence directives, and a more exact arrangement of area-priorities, would serve no useful purpose at this stage of ideal planning.

It is evident that any evaluation of important targets projected over a period of several years into the future can only be regarded as provisional. Unpredictable shifts in the balance of political forces, factors and opinions in a number of countries may modify the focus of American national concern. It will, therefore, be necessary periodically to reassess the current situation and to develop new projections into the future. Consequently, planning should remain imaginative and flexible, and operations must perforce retain a capacity for sympathetic responsiveness.

12. The findings of this paper may be summed up in a very simple formula: The most important tasks for a clandestine intelligence agency in the next few years are: (a) the penetration of the Soviet Union and its border satellites, and (b) the penetration of Communist parties in other important countries. Additional and ancillary objectives exist and have been indicated, but they represent a less provocative challenge to Secret Intelligence. Compelling reasons can be adduced to show that an effective assault on these targets would most certainly benefit from a coordination, and perhaps an integration, of SI and X-2 energies.



Chief, "P" Branch

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